



Australian  
Competition &  
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Commission

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# NEWS RELEASE

*Attention: Consumer writers*

## **ACCC ACTS ON COCA-COLA MYTH-BUSTING**

Coca-Cola will publish corrective advertisements in newspapers across the country about its 'myth-busting' campaign following action by the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission.

"The ACCC has accepted court-enforceable undertakings from Coca-Cola South Pacific Pty Ltd (CCSP), about statements published in Coca-Cola's *Kerry Armstrong on Motherhood & Myth-Busting* advertisement," ACCC Chairman, Mr Graeme Samuel, said today.

Coca-Cola South Pacific Pty Ltd (Coca-Cola) is responsible for marketing and technical services for the Coca-Cola beverage products within Australia.

"On 11 October 2008, Coca-Cola published an advertisement featuring actress Kerry Armstrong called *Kerry Armstrong on Motherhood and Myth-busting*. The advertisement referred to a number of 'myths' about Coca-Cola."

In particular, the advertisement used the words in relation to Coca-Cola:

- Myth. Makes you fat
- Myth. Rots your teeth
- Myth. Packed with caffeine.

On 18 October 2008 Coca-Cola published a further advertisement entitled *To all our Customers* which, in relation to the advertisement said "...we felt it was time to state the facts and to help you understand the truth behind Coca-Cola."

The ACCC believes the advertisements had the potential to mislead consumers by representing that:

- Coca-Cola cannot contribute to weight gain and obesity
- Coca-Cola cannot contribute to tooth decay
- 250ml of the Coca-Cola Product bearing the brand Diet Coca-Cola contains one half of the amount of caffeine as that contained in 250ml of tea, and
- a responsible parent can include Coca-Cola in a family diet without any regard whatsoever to the potential for weight gain or tooth decay arising from consuming Coca-Cola.

"Coca-Cola has been working with the ACCC to address concerns, and has agreed to:

- publish a corrective advertisement in; *The Australian, The Sydney Morning Herald, The Age, The Courier Mail, Adelaide Advertiser, The West Australian,* and the *Hobart Mercury*
- publish a corrective advertisement for a period of 28 days on <http://www.makeeverydropmatter.com.au>
- publish for six months on <http://www.makeeverydropmatter.com.au> the correct levels of caffeine for Coca-Cola, Diet Coca-Cola and Coca-Cola Zero and compare this with the levels of caffeine in the same amounts of tea brewed from leaf or teabag and instant coffee, and
- implement a trade practices law compliance review.

"After seeing the Myth Busting campaign the ACCC was immediately concerned about the misleading messages it was likely to send to consumers and in particular, to mothers who are often the decision makers about family nutrition.

"Coke's messages were totally unacceptable, creating an impression which is likely to mislead that Coca-Cola cannot contribute to weight gain, obesity and tooth decay. They also had the potential to mislead parents about the potential consequences of consuming Coca Cola."

Consumers can visit The Australian Government's website, [www.healthyactive.gov.au](http://www.healthyactive.gov.au) – click on "Healthy Weight", which has tips and information on physical health and nutrition.

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